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MATERIAL FOR DCI's BRIEFING ON POLAND BEFORE
THE SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
10 FEBRUARY 1982

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Testimony to Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

Mr. Chairman:

I have been asked to discuss with you the Intelligence Community's performance in assessing developments in Poland prior to December 13th and in alerting US policymakers to the possibility of forceful confrontation. By way of introduction, let me break that general question into some sub-questions and tell you the answers we gave at the time. I shall then go in some more detail into the chronology of events and our reporting of them.

What, then, were the essential subquestions as we saw them?

1. Would the Soviets accept the role which Solidarity was winning for itself? The evidence indicated that what Solidarity was in the process of achieving was deeply repugnant to the Soviets, and that they were working hard to roll back Solidarity's gains; and we reported this. But where and when, precisely, the Soviets would draw a line and compel compliance from the Poles was far less clear and evoked divergent opinions within the Community--particularly in light of the remarkable toleration by the Soviets for so long of developments in Poland that most observers at the outset believed they would never accept. It is highly probable that the Soviet leadership itself vacillated on policy toward Poland.
2. Why did the Soviets not invade in December 80--January 81 and then again in the March--April 81 time period when they came so close to doing so? We reported that this Soviet military pressure, particularly in March--April, had produced commitments from the Kania-Jaruzelski

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leadership to begin serious planning for martial law with active Soviet assistance--a very important development since it put the Soviets in the position of simultaneously shaping Polish planning and of improving their access to Polish decisionmakers. Later we also did a study of the hypothetical costs and benefits of an invasion for the Soviets. That study was not predictive in nature but it did bring out the high costs which the Soviets could incur. It thus pointed to the preferability of having the Poles themselves carry out the rollback of Solidarity.

3. What sort of leverage did the Soviets have? I have already alluded to Soviet public and private pressures, which we reported as the information became available to us. In November 1981, we also did an extensive study of Soviet economic leverage and concluded that this area offered the Soviets considerable scope for pressure and that Moscow was making repeated threats to cut back the supply of raw materials.
4. What kind of plans were the Poles making? We reported in detail on Polish planning, with Soviet assistance, for martial law and, in essence, told the policy community what eventually happened on December 13th.
5. Did we precisely predict when martial law would be imposed? No, we did not. But on October 30th 1981 we reported to the President and other selected members of the NSC that Polish plans for martial law had been completed and Polish police and military forces prepared for the operation. We also accurately described the details of these plans

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and explained that, because the Polish troops would not be moved into place until immediately prior to martial law's imposition, we would have no tactical warning of it. We had previously reported that Jaruzelski and the Polish military leadership favored proceeding with the martial law plans. In early December 1981 additional information on Polish martial law plans became available to us, and on 7 December a full status report was prepared.

After this introduction, I would now like to review the history of Polish planning for martial law and our reporting of it.

1. Martial law preparations first became a major theme in our reporting on Poland in the months following the December 1980 crisis.
 - a. In December, the Soviets had threatened to invade and impose martial law by themselves, but the Poles dissuaded them.
 - b. Thereafter, the Poles began serious planning for martial law, and we reported these preparations.
 - to the President and key cabinet level officials (special PDBs)
 - and to the overall policymaking community (NIDs) in more general form and without using information which was timely but extremely sensitive.
 - c. By March 1981, we were reporting that the Soviets' primary strategy for dealing with the Polish problem was to pressure the Polish authorities to impose martial law (see NID 3/13/81).
 - d. Based on our knowledge of martial law planning, we also were reporting that we would have no advance warning if martial law were imposed (see NID 3/28/81).

2. From April to July 1981, we reported continuing Soviet pressures to impose martial law. Polish resistance and temporizing, however, prompted the Soviets to shift their attention to bringing about changes in the Polish leadership.
3. After the Party Congress ended on 20 July, government proposals for price increases intensified the struggle with Solidarity, and we reported renewed planning by the regime for martial law operations.
 - a. In early August, for example, we told the President that the attitude of Polish leaders toward Solidarity had toughened markedly and martial law plans were being updated and coordinated with senior Soviet military officers in Poland.
 - b. In late August in a paper given to key cabinet members, we reported on Polish plans to impose martial law either piecemeal or in toto. (See special memo.)
4. After the first round of Solidarity's National Congress between 5-10 September, we reported especially intense preparations by the regime for martial law and a significant shift of opinion in favor of imposing martial law on the part of Polish military leaders, including Jaruzelski.
 - a. On 12 September, we told the President that the Chief of the Polish General Staff had told his colleagues that Poland was "approaching the institution of martial law" and that a decision to act might be made within a few days.
 - b. On 18 September in a Special Analysis in the NID, we reported that the Intelligence Community had detected a qualitative

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change in the attitudes of Solidarity and the Government that greatly increased the prospects for confrontation.

We also reported that the regime had prepared a detailed plan of military measures including curfews, arrest of Solidarity leaders, and total military control of the country.

c. On 24 September, we reported that the Polish Politburo had rejected the military's plan on 15 September for the imposition of martial law and that the Polish leadership was deeply divided over this issue. We also reported that the final decision would probably be determined by a combination of the second round of the Solidarity Congress and the severity of Soviet pressure, which remained high.

5. In the final months before the imposition of martial law, our greatest problem was to determine whether these differences within the leadership had been resolved.

a. On 19 October, we reported that Jaruzelski's replacement of Kania as Party Secretary on the previous day had increased the chances of confrontation and reminded our readers that the contingency planning for the imposition of martial law apparently was complete.

b. On 30 October, we reported to the President that plans for martial law had been completed and a schedule prepared that indicated when, relative to the declaration of martial law, the various forces involved in the operation would begin their

activities. Because troops apparently would not be moved into place until immediately prior to "H-hour", we again concluded (first time 3/28/81) that we could expect little warning of the implementation of martial law.

- c. In early December 1981, a full status report reviewed in detail how martial law would be carried out and stated that recent activity was consistent with the final preparations that would precede implementation of the martial law plan. The report also noted that there were signs that regime moderates were still seeking to find political solutions to contentious issues, and that there was no evidence that the Soviets were beginning parallel preparations.
- d. Thus, in the course of the year we alerted policymakers both to martial law preparations and to the high probability that we would get little or no warning. In the event, we received no evidence that a decision had been made to proceed with the martial law plan. Instead, the evidence indicated continuing hesitation. On 25 November, we learned [redacted] [redacted] that several days before, Soviet General Staff officers had reviewed the Polish plans for martial law and offered to help implement them, but that the Poles had declined their Soviet offer. We reported this on 28 November.

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- e. On 10 December, we reported that Marshal Kulikov, along with a group of senior officers, was back in Warsaw.
- f. On 11 December, a day before the imposition of martial law, we reported an increase in the public pressure that the Soviets were exerting on the Poles. We were not aware of any political intentions to impose martial law or of any military or police movements until only hours before martial law was imposed.

Mr. Chairman, the information I have outlined might give the impression that there was a clearly discernible crescendo in Poland pointing toward the imposition of martial law. Such was not the case. Despite the increasing collaboration between the Soviets and Polish military authorities behind the scenes, there were also disagreements within the Polish political leadership. In public, Jaruzelski continued to take a conciliatory posture and other events, such as Parliament's increasing independence, allowed some hope that the government, Church, and Solidarity would still be able to reach some sort of agreement. We did report on these various moves and possibilities of accommodation as well. The general thrust of our reports to policymakers, however, pointed to a government perfecting its martial law plan and having the ability to choose the best time to implement it.

In retrospect, then, how well did the Intelligence Community do? We did not predict the precise moment at which martial law was imposed. In addition, in our own minds we probably somewhat overestimated the preparations which Solidarity had made for such a contingency and the immediate

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resistance that the action would evoke from the Polish people; consequently, our reports may have been too skeptical about the regime's capacity effectively to execute the action. But, we did tell policymakers that the most likely scenario was not a Soviet invasion but a Polish imposition of martial law with the Soviets active only behind the scenes. We described how martial law was to be implemented and pointed out that we could provide little or no warning of impending action. On the night of 12 to 13 December, Jaruzelski set in train the martial law moves which we had been describing to our top policymakers for months and which we had last summarized in early December 1981. On balance, I believe the Intelligence Community did a commendable job in assessing the train of events in Poland prior to December 13th.

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